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Agenda item 87
International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space

India*: draft resolution

International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 51/122 of 13 December 1996 and 53/45 of 3 December 1998,

Deeply convinced of the common interest of mankind in promoting the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes and in continuing efforts to extend to all States the benefits derived therefrom, and also of the importance of international cooperation in this field, for which the United Nations should continue to provide a focal point,

Reaffirming the importance of international cooperation in developing the rule of law, including the relevant norms of space law and their important role in international cooperation for the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes, and of the widest possible adherence to international treaties that promote the peaceful uses of outer space,

Concerned about the possibility of an arms race in outer space,

Recognizing that all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, should contribute actively to the goal of preventing an arms race in outer space as an essential condition for the promotion of international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes,

Considering that space debris is an issue of concern to all nations,

Noting the progress achieved in the further development of peaceful space exploration and applications as well as in various national and cooperative space projects, which

* On behalf of the Working Group of the Whole on International Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee).

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contributes to international cooperation, and the importance of further international cooperation in this field,

Taking note with satisfaction of the successful conclusion of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III), held in Vienna from 19 to 30 July 1999 as a special session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space open to all States Members of the United Nations,[1]

Taking into account the recommendations of the "Space Millennium: Vienna Declaration of Space and Human Development", adopted by UNISPACE III,[2]

Having considered the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the work of its forty-second session,[3]

1. *Endorses* the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the work of its forty-second session;[3]

2. *Invites* States that have not yet become parties to the international treaties governing the uses of outer space[4] to give consideration to ratifying or acceding to those treaties;

3. *Notes* that, at its thirty-eighth session, the Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, in its working groups, continued its work as mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 53/45;[5]

4. *Welcomes* the new approach taken by the Committee in composing the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee[6] and endorses the recommendation of the Committee that the Subcommittee, at its thirty-ninth session, taking into account the concerns of all countries, in particular those of developing countries:

(a) Consider the following as regular agenda items:

(i) General exchange of views;

(ii) Status of the international treaties governing the uses of outer space;

(iii) Information on the activities of international organizations relating to space law;

(iv) Matters relating to the definition and delimitation of outer space and to the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit, including consideration of ways and means to ensure the rational and equitable use of the geostationary orbit without prejudice to the role of the International Telecommunication Union;

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[1] See *Report of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Vienna, 19-30 July 1999* (A/CONF.184/6).

[2] Ibid., chap. I, resolution 1.

[3] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/54/20).

[4] Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (resolution 2222 (XXI), annex); Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space (resolution 2345 (XXII), annex); Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects (resolution 2777 (XXVI), annex); Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space (resolution 3235 (XXIX), annex); and Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (resolution 34/68, annex).

[5] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/54/20), chap. II.C.

[6] Ibid., annex I, sect. B.

(b) Continue its consideration of review and possible revision of the Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space,[7] as a single issue and discussion item;

(c) Consider the following in accordance with the work plans adopted by the Committee:[8]

(i) Review of the status of the five international legal instruments governing outer space;

(ii) Review of the concept of the "launching State";

5. *Notes* that the Legal Subcommittee at its thirty-ninth session, in 2000, will submit its proposals to the Committee for new items to be considered by the Subcommittee at its fortieth session, in 2001;

6. *Notes also* that, in the context of paragraph 4 (a) (iv) above, the Legal Subcommittee will reconvene its working group to consider the item;

7. *Endorses* the recommendation of the Committee[9] that the Legal Subcommittee, at its thirty-ninth session, suspend consideration in its Working Group of the Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space pending the results of the work in the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, without prejudice to the possibility of reconvening its Working Group on that item if, in the opinion of the Legal Subcommittee, sufficient progress has been made in the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its thirty-seventh session, in 2000, to warrant the reconvening of the Working Group;

8. *Also endorses* the recommendations and agreements concerning the organization of work in the Legal Subcommittee;[10]

9. *Takes note* of the agreement reached by the Committee at its fortieth session on the composition of the bureaux of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies for the second term starting in 2000, in the context of the implementation of the measures relating to the working methods of those bodies,[11] which were endorsed by the General Assembly in paragraph 11 of its resolution 52/56, and notes that consultations among delegations and regional groups would be held concerning the members of the bureaux for the second term with a view to reaching consensus on the matter by the thirty-seventh session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, in 2000;

10. *Agrees* that the Committee should elect its officers at the beginning of its forty-third session, in 2000, in accordance with consensus agreement to be reached among the members of the Committee on the members of the bureaux of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies for the second term, as an exceptional arrangement for that session of the Committee;

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[7] See resolution 47/68.

[8] See A/AC.105/674, annex II.B. for the work plan for item (i) and *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/54/20), chap. II.C., para. 114 for the work plan for item (ii).

[9] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/54/20), para. 90.

[10] Ibid., paras. 109-117.

[11] Ibid., *Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/52/20), annex I.

11. *Notes* that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, at its thirty-sixth session, continued its work as mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 53/45;[12]

12. *Notes with satisfaction* that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its thirty-sixth session continued to consider on a priority basis the agenda item on space debris and that the Subcommittee concluded its work according to the multi-year work plan adopted by the Subcommittee at its thirty-second session;[13]

13. *Takes note with satisfaction* of the technical report on space debris[14] submitted by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee to the Committee, and agrees that the technical report should be widely distributed;

14. *Agrees* that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee should assess the effectiveness of existing space debris mitigation practices and the extent to which they were being implemented and that efforts to model and characterize the debris environment should continue;

15. *Welcomes* the new approach taken by the Committee in composing the agenda of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee,[15] and endorses the recommendation of the Committee that the Subcommittee, at its thirty-seventh session, taking into account the concerns of all countries, in particular those of developing countries:

(a) Consider the following items:

(i) General exchange of views and introduction to reports submitted on national activities;

(ii) The United Nations Programme on Space Applications and the coordination of space activities within the United Nations system following the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III);

(iii) Matters relating to remote sensing of the Earth by satellites, including applications for developing countries and monitoring of the Earth's environment;

(b) Consider the item on the use of nuclear power sources in outer space in accordance with the work plan adopted by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its thirty-fifth session;[16]

(c) Consider the following single issues and items for discussion:

(i) International cooperation in human spaceflight;

(ii) Presentations on new launch systems and ventures;

(iii) Space debris, on a priority basis;

(iv) Examination of the physical nature and technical attributes of the geostationary orbit and of its utilization and applications, including, *inter alia*, in the field of space communications, as well as other questions relating to developments in space communications, taking particular account of the needs and interests of developing countries;

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[12] Ibid., *Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/54/20), chap. II.B.

[13] A/AC.105/605, para. 83.

[14] A/AC.105/720.

[15] Ibid., annex I, sect. A.

[16] See A/AC.105/697, annex III, appendix.

16. *Notes* that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its thirty-seventh session would submit its proposal to the Committee for a draft provisional agenda for the thirty-eighth session of the Subcommittee, in 2001;

17. *Also notes* that the theme fixed for special attention at the thirty-seventh session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee would be "Space commercialization: an era of new opportunities" and that the Committee on Space Research and the International Astronautical Federation, in liaison with Member States, would be invited to arrange a symposium on that theme, with as wide a participation as possible, to be held during the first week of that session of the Subcommittee;

18. *Agrees* that, in the context of paragraphs 15 (a) (ii) and 16 above, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its thirty-seventh session should reconvene the Working Group of the Whole to consider the future work of the Subcommittee in the light of the recommendations of UNISPACE III;

19. *Also agrees* that, in the context of paragraph 15 (b) above, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its thirty-seventh session should reconvene its Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space;

20. *Endorses* the recommendation of the Committee[15] that, in the context of paragraph 15 (c) (iii) above, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its thirty-seventh session should review international application of the standards of the International Telecommunication Union and recommendations of the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee concerning the disposal of satellites in geosynchronous orbit at the end of their useful life;

21. *Also endorses* the United Nations Programme on Space Applications for 2000, as proposed to the Committee by the Expert on Space Applications;[17]

22. *Notes with satisfaction* that, in accordance with paragraph 30 of General Assembly resolution 50/27 of 6 December 1995, the African Regional Centres for Space Science and Technology Education in French language and in English language were inaugurated in Morocco and Nigeria, respectively, that the Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific continued its education programme in 1999 and that significant progress has been achieved in furthering the goals of the Network of Space Science and Technology Education and Research Institutions of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe and establishing regional centres for space science and technology education in the other regions;

23. *Recommends* that Member States concerned in Asia and the Pacific should hold further consultations, with the assistance of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, with a view to making the Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific grow into a network of nodes;

24. *Also recommends* that more attention be paid to all aspects related to the protection and the preservation of the outer space environment, especially those potentially affecting the Earth's environment;

25. *Considers* that it is essential that Member States pay more attention to the problem of collisions of space objects, including those with nuclear power sources, with space debris, and other aspects of space debris, calls for the continuation of national research on this question, for the development of improved technology for the monitoring of space debris and for the compilation and dissemination of data on space debris, also considers

[17] See A/AC.105/715, sect. II.

that, to the extent possible, information thereon should be provided to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, and agrees that international cooperation is needed to expand appropriate and affordable strategies to minimize the impact of space debris on future space missions;

26. *Urges* all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, to contribute actively to the goal of preventing an arms race in outer space as an essential condition for the promotion of international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes;

27. *Emphasizes* the need to increase the benefits of space technology and its applications and to contribute to an orderly growth of space activities favourable to sustained economic growth and sustainable development in all countries, in particular in the developing countries, and mitigation of the consequences of natural disasters;

28. *Takes note* of the interest of some developing countries, as well as other countries, in becoming members of the Committee, and requests the continued examination of the subject of increase in the number of members of the Committee;

29. *Requests* the Committee to resume its consideration, at its forty-third session, as a matter of priority, of ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes and to report thereon to the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session;

30. *Also requests* the Committee to resume its consideration, at its forty-third session, of the item entitled "Spin-off benefits of space technology: review of current status";

31. *Requests* the specialized agencies and other international organizations to continue and, where appropriate, enhance their cooperation with the Committee and to provide it with progress reports on their work relating to the peaceful uses of outer space;

32. *Requests* the Committee to continue its work, in accordance with the present resolution, to consider, as appropriate, new projects in outer space activities and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session, including its views on which subjects should be studied in the future.